



هيئة ضمان جودة التعليم و التدريب
Quality Assurance Authority for Education & Training

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Quality Education School
Maqabah - Northern Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date of Review: 16-18 April 2012

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The Schools Review Unit

The Schools Review Unit (SRU) is part of the Quality Assurance Authority for Education and Training (QAAET), an independent national authority, attached to the Cabinet and set up under Royal Decree No. 32 of 2008, amended by the Royal Decree No. 6 of 2009. It is established to raise standards in education and training.

The SRU is responsible for:

- evaluating and reporting on the quality of provision in all schools and kindergartens
- establishing success measures
- spreading best practice
- making recommendations for school/kindergarten improvements.

Review involves monitoring standards and evaluating the quality of provision against a clear set of indicators. The reviews are independent, objective and transparent. They provide important information for schools and kindergartens about their strengths and areas for improvement to assist in focusing efforts and resources as part of the cycle of school improvement in order to raise standards.

Review grades are awarded a four-point scale:

Grade description	Interpretation
Outstanding (1)	Outcomes or provision are at least good in all areas and outstanding in the majority.
Good (2)	Outcomes or provision are at least satisfactory in all areas and good in the majority.
Satisfactory (3)	A basic level of adequacy. There are no major weaknesses, or the majority of areas are satisfactory. Some areas may be good.
Inadequate (4)	There are major weaknesses or the majority of areas are inadequate.

Introduction

This review was conducted over three days, by a team of seven reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lessons and other activities, examined students' written and other work, analysed data concerning the school's performance and other documents, and talked with staff, students and parents. This report summarises their findings and recommendations.

Characteristics of the school

School's name		Quality Education School												
School type		Private												
Year of establishment		2003												
Age range of students		5-14 years												
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)		Primary			Middle					High				
		1-6			7-9					-				
Number of Students		Boys	164		Girls	121				Total	285			
Students' social background		Middle income												
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
	Classes	4	2	3	2	2	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	
Town /Village		Maqabah												
Governorate		Northern												
Number of administrative staff		7												
Number of teaching staff		22												
Curriculum		English												
Main language(s) of instruction		English												
Principal's tenure		2 years												
External assessment and examination		None												
Accreditation (if applicable)		-												
Number of students in the following categories		Outstanding			Gifted & Talented			Physical Disabilities			Learning Difficulties			
		-			-			-			-			
Major recent changes in the school		School being approved as a Cambridge International Examination (CIE) Centre												

Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	3: Satisfactory			
The school's capacity to improve	3: Satisfactory			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	3	3	-	3
Students' personal development	3	3	-	3
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	3	3	-	3
The quality of the curriculum implementation	3	3	-	3
The quality of support and guidance for students	3	3	-	3
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	3	3	-	3

Key:

- 1: Outstanding
- 2: Good
- 3: Satisfactory
- 4: Inadequate

Review judgements

Overall effectiveness

- ☐ **How effective is the school in meeting the needs of students and their parents?**

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The overall effectiveness is satisfactory due to the school's acceptable performance in all its work. Students' achievement across the school is geared towards better improvements mainly because of the developing teaching strategies being led by the newly appointed leadership. The satisfactory students' personal development is nurtured through support and guidance that are exhibited in the students' enthusiastic participation in the school life. Curriculum implementation is satisfactory also. The school provides meaningful learning activities, although teaching and curriculum resources in classrooms are limited. Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory, with good commitment by the executive directors to the school's development. This is exhibited in their clear understanding of priorities that should ensure students' continued progress and parents' satisfaction.

- ☐ **How strong is the school's capacity to improve?**

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The committed board of directors and knowledgeable leadership understand the need for school development. The well-informed staff have a realistic understanding of the school's strengths and general areas for development and are willing to move the school towards improvements. However, the school's attention to infrastructure issues limits the necessary emphasis on improving students' outcomes. The friendly atmosphere exhibited by everyone in the school links parents and students with a freedom to share their views with the principal through the open-door policy. Commitment shown by leaders and the willingness of teachers to improve indicates a continuing capacity to improve. The leaders create a cohesive ethos amongst staff and students, which produces a good family atmosphere inclusive of the differences in culture and background.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Students attain high pass rates with a large number of high achievers in internal examinations. However, this performance does not match their achievement and progress in the majority of lessons. An increase in students' performance in the majority of the classes, has been perceived in the internal examinations over the past three years, although there has been a decrease in the percentage of high achievers in Arabic and mathematics.

In lessons throughout the school, the majority of students' knowledge and understanding meet the expected standards and they make satisfactory progress in core subjects. Generally, their standards and progress in Arabic are insufficiently developed. Overall, students' standards, progress and achievement in English are better than in the other core subjects.

Students' achievement across the different subjects varies. In Arabic, most students reach expected standards in reading. Their writing and grammar skills are under developed and show insufficient progress. In lower grades, performance is better with the majority of students conversing fluently in standard Arabic using age-appropriate vocabulary. However, in higher grades, their oral skills are less well developed and by comparison they use a more limited range.

In English, students have good oral and reading skills. Most of the students read with appropriate fluency and expression, with appropriate understanding of grammar and good use of vocabulary. However, students' extended writing is limited across the school, as their writing skills are not developed as well as they could be.

In mathematics, most students' acquire mathematical knowledge, however, their application of knowledge is mostly procedural with only a fair understanding of key concepts like arithmetical operations on long division and using negative integers.

In science, the majority of students can recall key scientific facts, although they are sometimes unable to use the appropriate technical scientific terms. Students' investigative, problem solving and practical skills are at basic level, mostly due to limited opportunities provided in lessons to undertake experimental and enquiry-based learning.

In all subjects, students mostly rely on memory recall rather than using and applying their knowledge to develop understanding and extend appropriate skills.

□ How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Most students attend school regularly and punctually and respond well to the school's management of any absences and late arrivals. They behave well inside and outside the classrooms and respect their teachers. Students feel safe and secure and they maintain respectful and friendly relationships. In the good lessons, students participate enthusiastically, although in other lessons they are less motivated to learn and their participation is limited. Additionally, in the less effective lessons, students' self-confidence and skills in working independently and in small groups are more limited than they should be. A small group of students in each class take responsibility for their weekly assemblies and present with confidence and maturity. Students participate in external events such as local competitions and inter-school football matches as well as school committees and activities, including the Student Council where they represent the views of their peers. However, these opportunities are few and mainly involve the older students. Students demonstrate a good understanding of Bahrain's culture and heritage as they take part in national events and trips to cultural and historical sites. These help to develop their understanding of citizenship, especially for the non-Bahraini students.

The quality of provision

□ How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Most teachers have appropriate subject knowledge which is reflected in their instruction and explanations in lessons. A limited number of teachers present some inaccurate facts in lessons, such as incorrect grammar in Arabic. Most teachers enable students to acquire skills and understanding at satisfactory levels, for example through challenging discussions in the better English lessons. However this is inconsistent across subjects and there is little challenge in the less effective Arabic lessons. In the most effective lessons, particularly English and science, teachers use group-work and brainstorming, yet most lessons are heavily teacher-directed with appropriate instruction and use of question and answer sessions. In a few mathematics lessons particularly, students are able to work in small groups, but most lessons provide insufficient opportunities for students to learn together. Throughout the school, the focus of teaching is mainly on the use of textbooks and additional resources are used in only limited ways.

Classroom management in most lessons is appropriate and the organised and calm environment assists learning. However, time management in some lessons adversely affects students' achievement and progress, such as an unnecessarily long starter activity or high achievers completing work with no planned extension activity. Although students of all levels are effectively challenged in some lessons, especially English, in most subjects there are limited opportunities for developing higher-order thinking skills to widen students' cognitive and creative thinking. Low achieving students receive effective encouragement and support in lessons, but the learning needs of high achievers are less well catered for to ensure they make appropriate progress.

All teachers have lesson plans, however most of them do not clearly plan for differentiation in their lessons and only a minority share lesson objectives with students. Students are regularly assigned suitable homework that is either completion or extension of class work. In most lessons, teacher assessment is most often oral feedback and observation, which helps to identify students' needs and measure their progress, particularly low achievers. However, continuous assessment in some lessons lacks effectiveness in measuring students' acquisition of skills and understanding as well as the lessons' objectives. Students' written work is mostly marked, but without sufficient written feedback to help them improve.

□ How well does the implementation and enrichment of the curriculum meet the educational needs of the students?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school provides a broad range of learning experiences for students in Grades 1 to 8 based on the Ministry of Education curriculum and the English National Curriculum. A more limited range is offered in Grade 9 for the IGCSE. The school lacks an overall systematic curriculum review policy to plan modifications to meet the different abilities and changing needs of students. There is an overly heavy reliance on textbooks to ensure progression and continuity within subjects, especially in the lower grades. In lessons, teachers make links between subjects, such as discussing favourite sports in English lessons. However, cross-curricular planning, to ensure students make meaningful connections between subjects and experience a coherent curriculum, is too limited. Older students, particularly, develop an understanding of their responsibilities within the community through Student Council membership and as prefects, who carefully monitor the behaviour of other students. Curriculum implementation and interpretation, in science and mathematics, gives insufficient attention to developing students' investigative and practical skills in all grades. Students participate in weekly extra-curricular activity, which over the year provides exposure to a range of experiences, such as football, story writing and clay modelling. Although teaching resources in classrooms are limited, the curriculum is

enriched through curriculum-related field trips and visits by guest speakers, such as health and fire safety specialists.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Guidance and support is provided competently. Induction programmes help students settle successfully at the start of the school year through parent meetings and teacher introductions, however induction is less effective for students joining during the year. An information meeting is held to help students choose electives when starting the IGCSE programme. Diagnostic tests appropriately determine students' educational needs prior to successful admission. Teachers keep records of students' academic and personal development and most maintain a careful analysis of their progress. However, there is limited use of assessment analysis to meet the different learning needs of all students during lessons, particularly the high achievers. Parents are well-informed about their children's progress through formal quarterly reports which include an appropriate measure of students' personal development, as well as through students' diaries and text messages. The open-door policy also welcomes parents to visit the school and raise their concerns. Students receive appropriate support and personal guidance from the social counsellor and teachers when they face any problems. The school promotes a respectful atmosphere with clear behaviour expectations that are well-maintained. Students and staff work in a healthy and safe environment. Risk assessments are made of the facilities, fire extinguishers are located in each building and the qualified school nurse discusses health issues with the students.

Leadership, management and governance

□ How effective are leadership, management and governance in promoting high achievement, strong personal development and school improvement?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school community shares a common goal for school development. The principal motivates the staff and provides support and encouragement to create a harmonious atmosphere. This is reflected in the appreciation of teachers and their cooperation and acceptance of change and commitment to the school. Due to the small size of the school, most academic leadership responsibilities remain with the principal, supported by the

coordinator, and this tends to slow the pace of any planned changes. The school improvement plan is guided by a set of priorities, though the focus on students' outcomes is less sharp than it might be. These priorities are carefully monitored by the principal and the board of directors, for example the introduction of the IGCSE this year to provide an external assessment of students' attainment and as response to parents' wishes. However, there is not yet a systematic written strategic plan which includes realistic goals and procedures for monitoring and evaluating successful implementation of initiatives. This includes inconsistent use of self-evaluation mechanisms to clearly assess whole school performance and identify key areas for improvement, such as careful analysis of students' attainment to inform curriculum modification. Evaluation of teachers, through regular lesson observations and visits as well as self-evaluation by teachers themselves ensures that their professional development needs are adequately identified. This has led to workshops on time management and differentiation in lessons. However there is insufficient follow-up to assess the impact of this training on teaching and learning in lessons.

The school provides science laboratories and a computer room, although general classroom resources are too limited. The school listens to students' and parents' views and responds positively to some of their suggestions, such as the change of canteen contractor. However, the school has not yet developed a sufficiently systematic approach to seeking the views of all parents. There are some links with community institutions, including some students attending a sports club to develop skills.

The principal and board of directors have well-understood and respected roles and responsibilities. The board is appropriately involved and members provide knowledgeable support in key management areas and for strategic planning. Their weekly meetings ensure the principal is suitably held accountable for the overall effectiveness of the school.

The school's main strengths

- A committed board of directors and knowledgeable principal who understand the need for school development, bearing in mind the realities and constraints
- A friendly atmosphere that permeates through school
- Parents' support and satisfaction.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- raise students' academic achievement particularly in Arabic
- develop a range of teaching strategies to ensure students' full participation and higher achievement in lessons by providing more opportunities for:
 - independent and small group learning
 - differentiated learning activities to provide challenge to high achievers and support for those with learning difficulties
 - investigative and analytical skills
 - rigorous assessment and techniques to identify and meet students' needs
- strengthen performance management through a more rigorous and systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching
- accelerate the creation and the implementation of a strategic plan against clear priorities to ensure continuous improvements in all aspects of school life.